



# Highland Park Master Plan



2001

City of Indianapolis,  
Bart Peterson, Mayor



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 3
Master Plan Process	
History	
Existing Conditions	Page 8
Service Area	
Demographics	
Park Site	
Public Participation	Page 15
Previous Plans	
Master Plan Recommendations	Page 18
Action Plan	Page 21
Conclusion	Page 24
Public Meeting #1, January 27, 2000	Page 25
Public Meeting #2, April 27, 2000	Page 26
Public Meeting #3, August 17, 2000	Page 27
Park Board Approval	Page 28
Metropolitan Development Commission Approval	Page 29

## Introduction

Highland Park is a neighborhood park located on the Near East side of Indianapolis, Indiana. At 1100 East New York Street, Highland Park is comprised of 4.09 acres of hilly, semi-shaded parkland that is primarily surrounded by older, single-family, residential housing units. Many of the trees in the park and along its perimeter are mature trees with diameters at chest height reaching 36 inches. The park was acquired in 1898 and, as a result of its "hilly" topography and nearness to downtown, has been a long-time favorite location for viewing the downtown skyline and city fireworks displays on July 4<sup>th</sup>. The park is situated within the boundaries of the Holy Cross-Westminster Neighborhood Association. As a result of this association, the park enjoys a strong neighborhood "ownership" that is exemplified by the many volunteer recreation programs, park maintenance, and policing efforts that occur there.

The Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation has classified its parks into several categories based on physical size, service area, and existing amenities, facilities and programs. Examples of park types include Regional, Community, Neighborhood, Mini-Park, Special Use, Sports Complexes, Greenways, Natural Areas and Memorials. The classification of each park type guides the present and future development of the park and also provides limitations on the over development of each park.

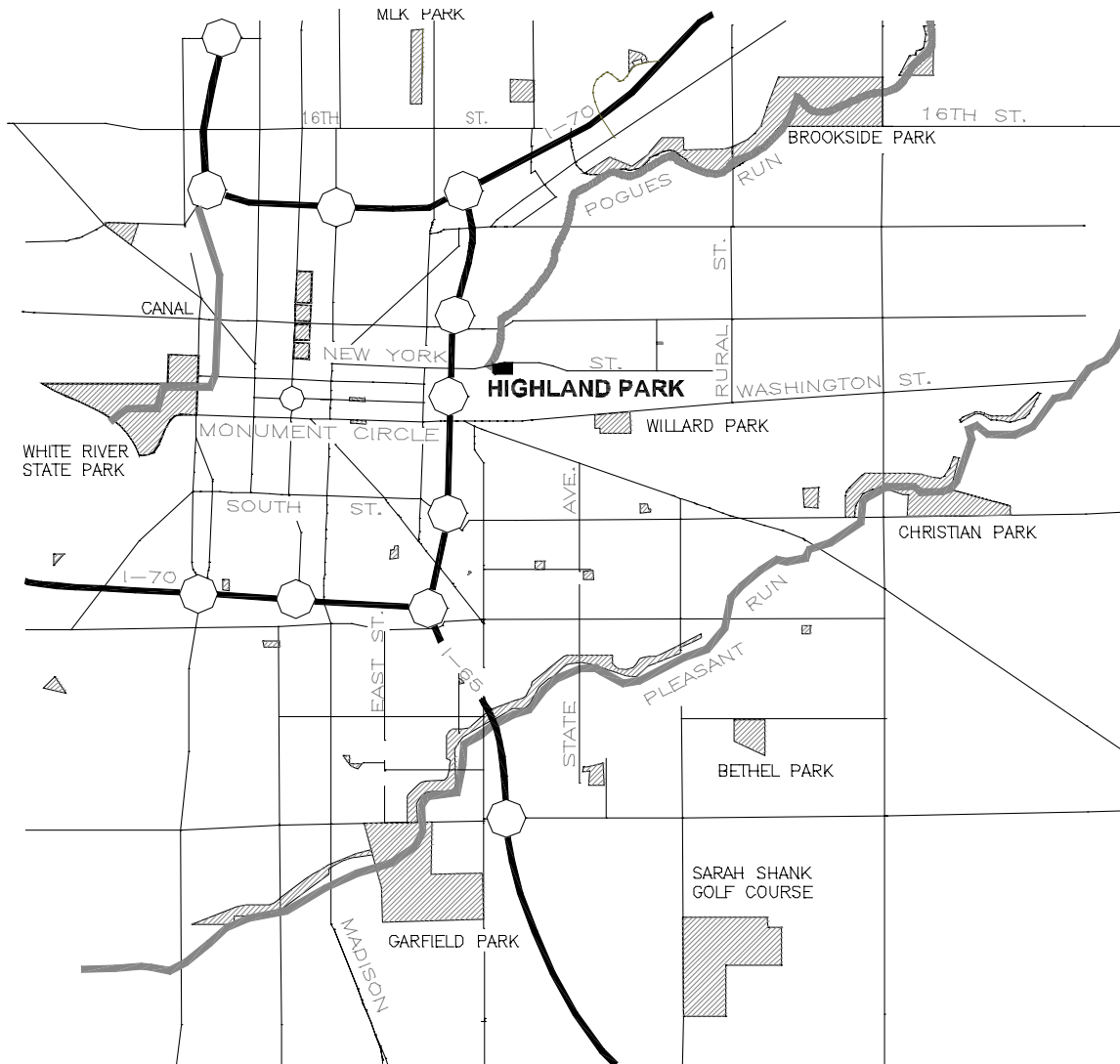
The physical size of Highland Park and its designation as a Neighborhood Park define the variety and quantity of programs and amenities that can be placed in the park. Neighborhood parks are described as follows in the *Pathways to the Future---The 1999 Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan for Indianapolis-Marion County, Indiana* using National Recreation and Park Association definitions:

"The basic unit of the park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. They should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities geared specifically for those living in the service area. Accommodating a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, senior citizens, and special populations, is important. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to successful design. The Neighborhood Park is designed to provide the types of recreation one would expect to be able to walk to rather than be required to drive to. The facilities should vary depending on the age, structure and social characteristics of the specific neighborhoods . . .

. . . Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive park uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. With the exception of limited use by youth teams, neighborhood parks are

not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems, and congestion . . . .  
... As a general rule, active recreational facilities should consume roughly 50% of the park's acreage. The remaining 50% should be used for passive activities, reserve, ornamentation, and conservation as appropriate. Developing an appealing park atmosphere should be considered an important site element."

### Location Map





## Existing Conditions

The park presently totals 4.09 acres and includes a basketball court, playground, and a series of asphalt paths. The existing playground is at least ten years old and does not meet the current safety and ADA accessibility standards. In addition to the playground, two swing sets and a merry-go-round are located within the park and do not meet current standards. The basketball court, located in the southwest area of the park currently has been reduced to one goal in response to community request. The asphalt paths within the park are in stable condition but have numerous cracks along the paths. In addition to the existing asphalt paths, there is also a brick sidewalk along Highland Avenue that is important to the site, as well as the surrounding neighbors. As of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2001, a new ADA accessible playground structure was being installed.



Existing Playground



Existing Playground



Existing Basketball Court



Existing Asphalt Paths

Within the park are two steep banks, one along New York Street, and the other along Dorman Street. While the bank along New York Street is in good condition, the bank along Dorman Street shows signs of erosion, and should be protected against future damage. Also within the park are several hills that allow for a unique view of the downtown skyline. The view of the downtown skyline can best be seen from the top of the hill located in the central area of the park. An existing tree, however, currently obstructs this view. The park is home to several mature trees and large open area, which appeal to the surrounding neighbors.



Existing brick sidewalk along Highland Avenue



Eroding bank along Dorman Avenue



View of downtown skyline looking West from top of hill



The neighborhood surrounding the park has dense residential populations. Although the majority of the service area is residential, there is an industrial portion in the Northwest corner that extends Southward along the interstate. Surrounding the park are four city streets, three of which allow for parallel parking, and New York Street which is a busy traffic corridor. Park users are protected from New York Street by a fence that runs along the northern boundary of the park. Along Dorman Street, Marlowe Street and Highland Avenue there are three park entrances. Along Marlowe Street, which serves as a main access into the park, the entrance walk into the park consists of loose gravel connected to the asphalt paths.



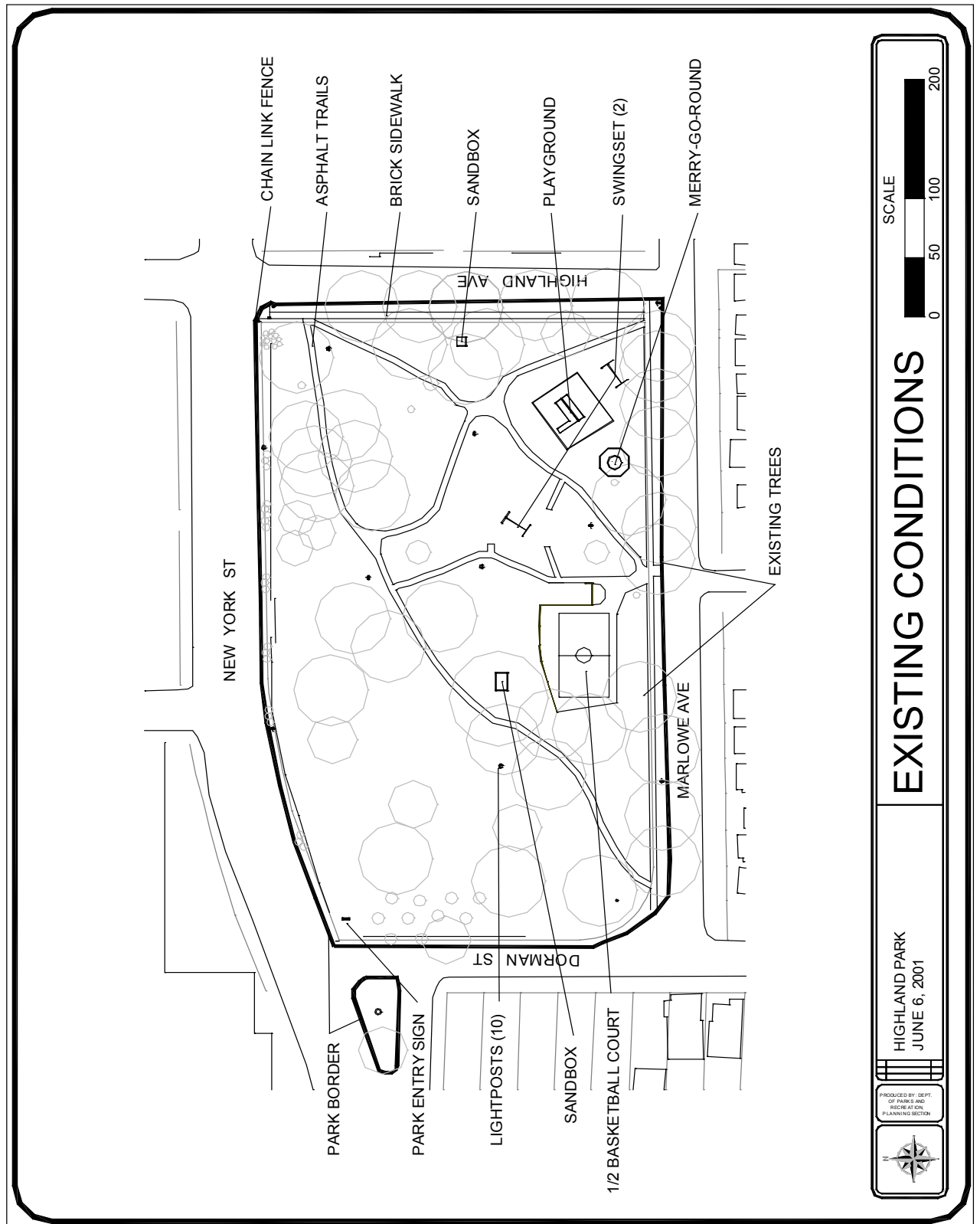
Surrounding neighborhood



New York Street viewshed



Marlowe Street/ Southern entrance



Existing Conditions



## Public Participation

With any planning document, public input is of great importance. In developing this plan, the Department of Parks and Recreation held three public meetings to solicit input from neighborhood residents and community leaders. These meetings were held close to the park at Indianapolis Public School #14 and Westminster United Presbyterian Church.

At the first meeting, intended to be an informational gathering meeting, the approximately 24 people in attendance were asked to list what they liked about the park, followed by what they disliked about the park. Another list was then made regarding improvements that residents would like to see made in the park. These lists are printed in their entirety in Appendix I.

Several voiced their desire to keep the green, open spaces within the park. Others stated that they liked the view to the downtown skyline, the curvilinear pathways, the beautiful, mature trees and the historical character of the park.

One of the primary concerns about the park is the basketball court within the park. Residents stated that the basketball courts are noisy and invite fights, profanity, drugs and alcohol use into the park. The users of the basketball court intimidate many park users from using the space. Other concerns named were the heavy traffic surrounding the park, lack of handicap accessibility, and poor maintenance of paths, equipment and park grounds.

At the second public meeting the concerns of the public were reviewed, and additional comments were made. The approximately 21 residents in attendance also listed several additional issues not raised in the first meeting. These include a desire for a parks rules sign in both English and Spanish, a sidewalk along New York Street, additional trash cans within the park, and the request to provide programming within the park. These issues are printed in their entirety in Appendix II.

At the third, and final, public meeting a draft master plan drawing was presented for discussion. From the approximately 16 attendee's positive response, it appears that the plan addresses their concerns.

## **Master Plan Recommendations**

From the public meeting input, as well as staff input and experience, these recommendations were compiled. The following list, in alphabetical order, corresponds to the Master Plan Drawing on page 19.

### **FAMILY ACTIVITY CENTER**

This feature is a grouping of several activities that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Typically these activity centers include horseshoe pits, croquet courts, bocce courts and several checker tables. The elements of the center will be located in close proximity to the proposed picnic shelter. Thus the shelter will serve as the central point of the family activity center. Equipment such as horseshoes and croquet mallets will need to be available to park users. Details regarding the availability of equipment to the public should be worked out prior to installation.

### **HALF COURT BASKETBALL/ PLAYCOURT**

There is currently one basketball court located in the southern half of Highland Park. At the first public meeting the neighborhood residents expressed that they felt intimidated by the users of the basketball court and that the court invited fights, profanity, drug and alcohol use into the park. Following that meeting one of the goals was removed, converting the court into a half court. This change allows the remaining half to be utilized for various hardcourt activities. The intended result is that basketball will be less inviting for adult players and will give neighborhood residents and children a place to play.

### **HILLTOP GATHERING SPACE**

The hilltop location in Highland Park is a unique spot in a unique park. The varied topography and dramatic view toward downtown make the hilltop a favorite stopping point for walkers, bikers and fireworks watchers. This place could be enhanced with a small paved plaza and seating. This would also open the opportunity for small groups from day camps or school classes to gather in the space for instruction, lunch or other organized activities.

### **IMPROVED PARK ENTRANCES**

It is recommended that entrances to the park be evaluated for ADA accessibility and functionality. Continuing the use of brick pavers from the east end of the park into these entrances could enhance them visually as well as physically.

### **PICNIC SHELTER**

A picnic shelter should be installed in the park on the knoll overlooking the playground, basketball court and future spray area. A picnic shelter will allow for expanded programming in the park, such as summer lunch programs and day camps. This location would serve as a focal point for the park activity in addition

to providing visibility to nearby park activities. A hexagonal shape was chosen and will fit nicely into the park.

#### PLAYGROUND STRUCTURE

There is currently a playground, which consists of a playground structure, swings and a whirl, located in the southeast corner of Highland Park. This playground however, is in poor condition and does not meet current playground safety and accessibility standards. This playground should be replaced with new equipment. The proposed playground, in addition to the structure itself, will include two sets of swings.

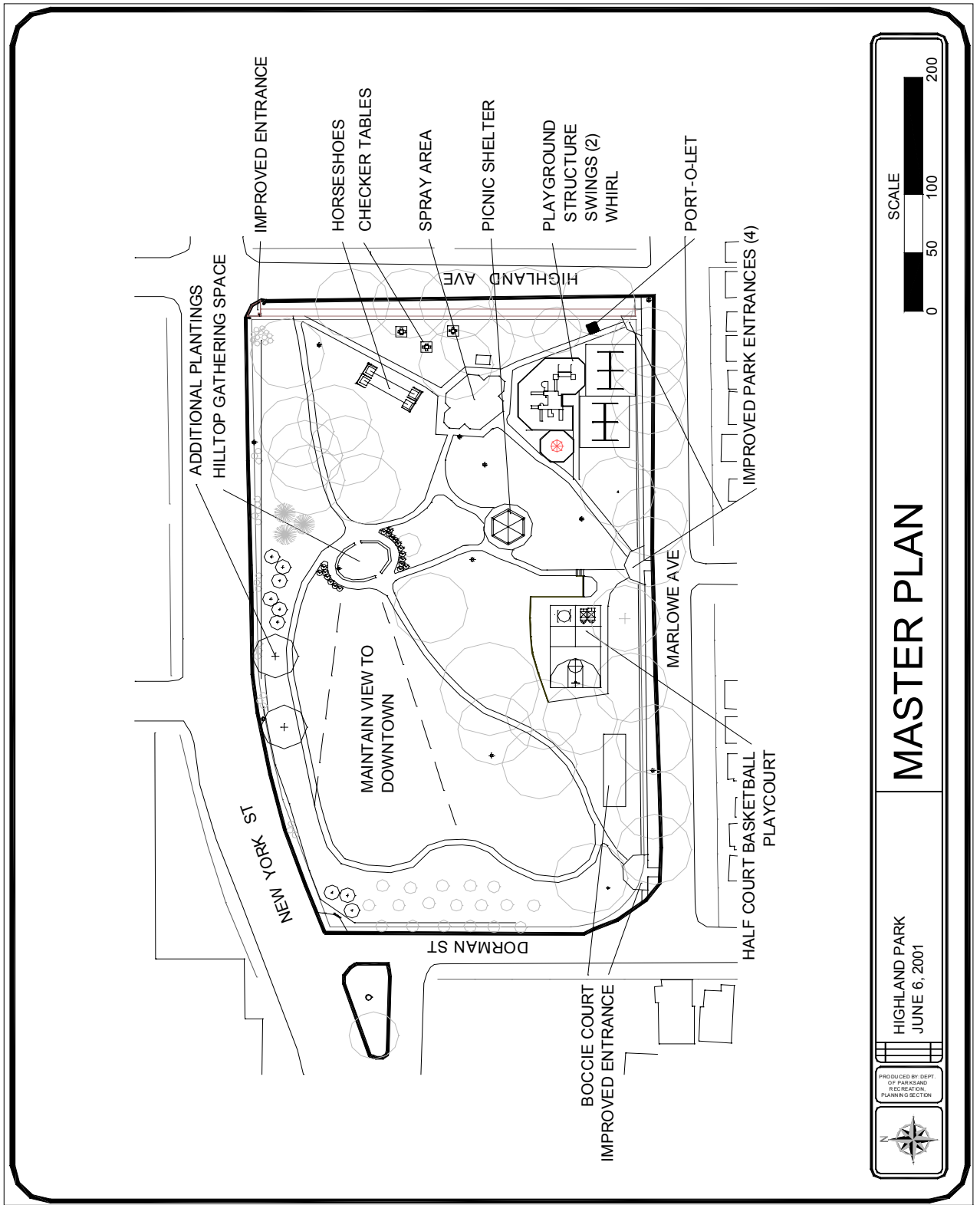
#### SPRAY AREA

A spray area would be a great amenity to the park. Located near the existing playground, this spray area would be a good, low cost recreational facility. A spray area consists of a concrete pad, flush with the ground, with water jets embedded into it. When someone walks past the electronic eye, the water comes on and cycles through various events for approximately ten minutes. This feature will allow visitors of all ages to cool off on summer days.

#### SITE FURNISHINGS

Several small improvements were suggested that would enhance the quality of the park. Additional picnic tables, trash cans and grills were requested by the neighborhood residents and would benefit the park. Residents also emphasized the need for restroom facilities within the park, so a port-o-let should be maintained within the park.





Master Plan

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Highland Park Master Plan, 1<sup>st</sup> Public Meeting**  
 January 27, 2000 7:00PM  
 IPS School #14 Media Center, 1250 E. Market Street

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Tina Jones, Senior Park Planner. Mrs. Jones introduced the Indy Park Staff members in attendance. Other Parks staff in attendance included Mrs. Jones, Mr. Don Colvin, Principal Park Planner and Mrs. Sheryl Richardson, Neighborhood Parks Coordinator.

Mrs. Jones explained to those in attendance the Master Plan process and how community input would fit in. She then set the context for Highland Park by explaining the differences between Regional, Community and Neighborhood Parks. Mrs. Jones stated that Highland Park was designated as a Neighborhood Park. Mrs. Jones also explained the extended timeline of the Master Plan process by discussing future public meetings and their purposes. Mrs. Jones then opened the discussion for input about what people like about the park, what is disliked about the park, and what neighbors would like to see improved about the park. The findings and comments were listed on a large display board and are summarized below:

Likes	Dislikes	Wishes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View to downtown skyline</li> <li>• Historic character</li> <li>• Quiet, urban green space</li> <li>• Pathway layout, curvilinear</li> <li>• Beautiful, mature trees</li> <li>• Prettiest place on the near east side</li> <li>• Easy access</li> <li>• Open green space for kids to play</li> <li>• Appearance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No bathroom</li> <li>• Need protection from traffic</li> <li>• Not ADA accessible (SW and SE corner)</li> <li>• Poorly maintained paths</li> <li>• General maintenance is poor</li> <li>• Noisy basketball court</li> <li>• Broken glass</li> <li>• No shelter</li> <li>• Fights, profanity, drugs, alcohol use in park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Amenities               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playcourt-hard space, Playground</li> <li>Spray pool, Trail, measured-mile</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Site furnishings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benches, Fence, Grills</li> <li>Kiosk, Picnic tables, Port-o-lets</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Landscape Enhancements               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gateway into park, Landscape plantings</li> <li>Shrub plantings along New York Street</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Programming               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult, senior activities, Activities for Mom with Kids</li> <li>Bike/skate ramp, Youth basketball</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Other issues discussed:

- External park issues were discussed during the meeting and are listed below:
- DCAM- crosswalk at Highland Street
- Sidewalks
- Slow down speed of traffic
- Push button for light
- More land
- Speed bumps on side streets
- ADA access at curbs

Mrs. Jones closed by thanking those in attendance for their input and participation. 24 people were in attendance with representatives from Holy Cross- Westminster Neighborhood and IPS School #14 parent group.

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Highland Park Master Plan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Meeting**

April 27, 2000 7:00PM  
School #14, 1250 E. Market Street

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Tina Jones, Senior Parks Planner. She in turn introduced other Park's staff in attendance. Other Parks staff in attendance included Mrs. Jones, Mr. Don Colvin, Principal Park Planner and Mr. Michael Krosschell, Senior Park Planner.

Mrs. Jones began with an explanation of what a Master Plan is. She then reviewed for those present the existing condition of Highland Park. The existing features noted are the view to the downtown skyline, historic character, curvilinear pathways, and the open green space. Mrs. Jones then discussed the lists made at the first meeting of the likes, dislikes and wishes that residents have related to Highland Park. Mrs. Jones then opened the discussion for additions to or discussions of these topics. Additional findings and comments were added and displayed on a large board, and are summarized below:

Additional Issues Raised	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Installation of a Parks Rules Sign- Needs to have rules so police and rangers can enforce them. Sign should also be listed in Spanish.</li><li>• Sidewalk along New York Street</li><li>• Permit parking was requested for residents who live within the neighborhood</li><li>• Request to include programming in the master plan document</li><li>• Request to move fence back so community can help beautify park corner in fall</li><li>• Request to anchor picnic tables</li><li>• Additional trash cans located within the park, as well as anchoring the new and additional trashcans within the park</li><li>• Purchase or lease of property across New York Street for more activities</li><li>• Request for electrical access for seasonal use</li></ul>	

Other issues discussed:

- Public was in favor of adding horseshoe areas to the park
- Public consensus was that the park would keep the half basketball court for one year and decide if it should be removed based on profanity, drug-use, non-neighborhood use, and availability of an adult basketball court elsewhere.

Mrs. Jones then closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their input and participation. 21 people were in attendance with representatives from Holy Cross- Westminster Neighborhood, IPS School #14 parent group, There is Hope Church and Arsenal Heights Neighborhood.



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Highland Park Master Plan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Public Meeting**

August 17, 2000 7:30PM  
Westminster United Presbyterian Church, 445 N. State Avenue

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Tina Jones, Senior Parks Planner. Mrs. Jones introduced the Indy Park Staff members in attendance. Other Parks staff in attendance included, Mrs. Jones and Mr. Don Colvin, Principal Park Planner.

Mrs. Jones presented the draft master plan for Highland Park and reviewed the Action Plan for the park as well. Mrs. Jones explained that the action plan is written to serve as a guideline for improvements in the park. The action plan also contains the proposed elements for the park with their estimated cost and the estimated time line to prioritize the actions. Also presented was a list of actions that should be addressed in the short term. These items are listed below:

Maintenance Work Orders		
#	Action	Description
1	Signage	Install English/Spanish park rules signs
2	Signage	Relocate Shepherd Community Sign
3	Trash cans	Locate additional cans and anchor
4	Chain link fence at Norwest corner	Relocate diagonal fence and Highland Park sign
5	Port-o-let	Site, install concrete pad, install/anchor port-o-let
6	Hard surface play court	Remove second basketball goal
7	Picnic tables	Identify location for single tables and picnic clusters and install on concrete pads
8	Grills	Identify two locations to complement picnic areas
9	Turf	Improve maintenance, reduce broadleaf weeds
10	Existing Trees	Remove three trees in historic viewshed
11	Weeds	Improve maintenance or form partnership
12	Existing Seatwall	Improve/renovate/extend existing walls as needed
13	Historic Lights	Maintain lights in good condition
14	Maintain historic brick walk	Develop long term maintenance plan and implement

Mrs. Jones closed the meeting by thanking those in attendance for their input and participation. 16 people were in attendance with representatives from Holy Cross-Westminster Neighborhood.

**General Resolution No. 48, 2001**

**Board of Parks and Recreation  
Consolidated City of Indianapolis, Indiana**

**Be It Resolved That The Board Hereby Approves:**

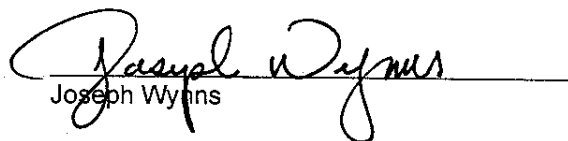
**the adoption of the 2001 Master Plan for Highland Park, 1100 East New York Street.**

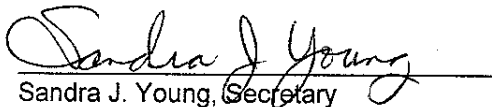
FURTHER, RESOLVED, that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to implement such amendment for and in behalf of the Department.

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

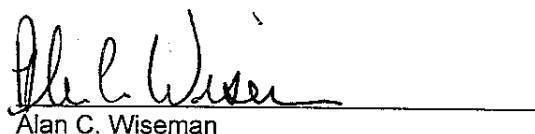
  
Assistant Corporation Counsel

  
Joseph Wynns

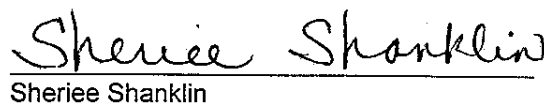
  
Sandra J. Young, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Diana Wilson Hall

7.26.01  
Date

  
Alan C. Wiseman

\_\_\_\_\_  
William H. Stinson

  
Sheriee Shanklin

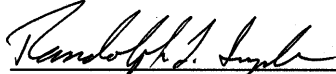
METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA  
RESOLUTION NO. 02-CPS-R-005

RESOLUTION 02-CPS-R-005, amending the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana.

Be it resolved that, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4, the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, hereby amends the Comprehensive or Master Plan for Marion County, Indiana, by the adoption of the Highland Park Master Plan, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as an amendment to the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana.

Be it further resolved that the Secretary of the Metropolitan Development Commission is directed to certify copies of this Resolution 02-CPS-R-005, amending the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana.

Be it further resolved that the Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development is directed to mail or deliver certified copies of this Resolution 02-CPS-R-005, to the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, the City-County Council of Indianapolis and Marion County, and the Board of Commissioners of Marion County, Indiana and to the legislative authorities of the incorporated cities and towns of Marion County, Indiana that are directly affected by this plan. The Director shall also file one (1) copy of the Resolution and one (1) summary of the plan in the office of the Recorder of Marion County.

  
Randolph Snyder, Presiding Officer  
Metropolitan Development Commission  
MAY 01 2002

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM  
AND ADEQUACY THIS 24<sup>th</sup>  
DAY OF APRIL, 2002.

  
Stephen Neff  
Assistant Corporation Counsel